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Decreolization- The Dying of a Language or a Natural Variation?

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Abstract

　　Is creole special in nature and status or alike standard languages in either one or both aspects? Is the origin of creole language a sort of cornerstone in the quest of the origin of language? Is decreolization the dying of a language or a natural variation? These and other questions might be somehow answered through the post-creole continua analytic procedure and the findings from researches on creole development and usage. However, there is not clear consent on these matters yet. The present paper intends to shed a light on some of the mentioned questions above by providing a discussion on decreolization and creolization so as to contrast different perspectives and draw personal conclusions about the nature of Creoles.

Keywords: Creole, Standard Language, Post-Continuum Analysis, Creolization, Decreolization.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The discussion about the nature of creole languages is a battlefield where some categorize them as dialects, some as variants and some as full systems which may be called officially 'a language'. The problem relies on the uncertainty of the origin and development of creoles which explanation still remain as a hypothesis or tan unproved theory. There are various approaches to the study of creoles' origin. Firstly, for certain scholars, creoles are a 'deviation from other systems' (Bickerton, 2004), originated from pidgins (Hall,1962). For

some others, they represent systems 'in their own right' (Hymes,1971) that are linked to other systems as languages from the same linguistic family are (DGraff, 1999). In fact, the origin of creole languages is still debated, still unknown. Secondly, if creoles come from other systems, then their variations may be explained as natural movements of the post-creole continuum from the basilect to the acrolect, in extreme cases, to the standard language, and vice versa. On the other hand, if they are taken as languages , then, the utmost tendencies to resemble the standard language may be regarded as the 'dying of the creole language'. Thus, depending on the own perception of creole languages, the metaphor of creolization and decreolization as the birth and dying of a language may be deemed appropriate or not.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Dereck Bikerton's (1976) traditional theories and Michel Degraff's (2004) modern perspectives are the major protagonists of this debate about creoles. Along with their works , some other researches have been developed in order to analysis existing creoles, their functioning and possible connection with formal languages as well as some phenomena involved in their development such as creolization and decreolization. Hereafter a chart with a general description of some of the main works related specifically to these two processes:

Title	Author	Year	Topic	Source
Dynamics of a Creole System	Derek Bickerton	1976	Port-creole continuum analysis Basilect, mesolect and acrolect	Language, Vol. 52, No. 4
Constraining Variation in Decreolization	William Washabaugh	1977	Bickerton's analysis expanded Creole language in Providencia island, Colombia	Language, Vol. 53, No. 2
Phonological Hypercorrection in the Process of Decreolization: The Case of Trinidadian English	Donald Winford	1978	Hipercorrection Decreolization	Journal of Linguistics, Vol. 14, No. 2
On Decreolization and Language Death in Gullah	Patricia Jones-Jackson	1984	Process of decreolization of Gullah language	Language in Society, Vol. 13, No. 3

			Dying languages	
Reconsidering Creole Exceptionalism	Derek Bickerton	2004	Response towards Degraff's theories on creole language and personal allegations	Language, Vol. 80, No. 4
Against Creole Exceptionalism	Michel Degraff	2004	Response towards Bickerton's theories on creole language and personal allegations	Language, Vol. 80, No. 4
Linguists' Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Creole Exceptionalism	Michel Degraff	2005	Response towards Bickerton's theories on creole language and personal allegations	Language in Society, Vol. 34, No. 4

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Before starting the discussion whether creole should be taken as an 'in its own right' language or as originated from pidgins, it is crucial to clarify some basic concepts. Let us do that as follows:

Creolization

Generally speaking creolization is the process in which creole cultures emerged in the New World as a result of the mixture among indigenous people from America and West Africa and European descendents. In linguistics, some argue that creole is a pidgin that has become the first language of a new generation, in other words, that creoles arise when they become mother tongues. Hence, creolization is the process of expansion of various linguistic aspects of a pidgin such as morphology , syntax and the regularization of phonology. However, the relation of creole languages with their standard version is quite complex so as to give a final explanation of how a creole emerges and evolves.

Therefore, there are a variety of theories provided that try to offer an explanation for the *Creole genesis* or creolization phenomenon. They can be divided in four main categories:

+ Theories focusing on European input
+ Theories focusing on Non-European input
+ Gradualist and developmental hypothesis
+ Universalist approaches

Theories focusing on European input

1. Monogenetic theory

According to this theory, creoles all come from a single Mediterranean lingua franca via a West African Pidgn Portuguese in the 17th century, relexified by the slaves who came from that area, and then transmitted in the Atlantic slave trade. Hugo Schuchardt(1842), a well-known german philologist, was the first one in proposing the theory in the late 19th century and was popularized by Taylor (1977) , Whinnom (1956), Thompson (1951) and Stewart (1962) in the late 1950s and early 1960s

2. Domestic origin hypothesis

First formulated by Hancock (1985), this is a theory related only to English- based creoles. According to it, some English-speaking traders went to Gambia and Sierra Leona for trading in the 16th century and mixed with local population , which caused the origin of a pidgin among slaves that was latter transmitted in slave depots and then expanded to the West Indies as a component of emerging English creoles.

3. European dialect origin hypothesis

This hypothesis claims that French-based creoles are the best candidates as representatives of a philogenetical relation with the standard language as there are many French dialects like the koiné French in Paris and some dialects in Quebec and Acadian communities which resemble some French-based creoles. The supporters of this hypothesis argue that this is compatible with the *imperfect language transmission* in koiné genesis and the *gradualism in change* of creole languages.

4. Foreing or Baby Talk

According to the Foreign Talk hypothesis, native speakers simplify their language in order to better communicate when people who don't know their language originate a simplified version of it. Arends, Muysken & Smith (1995) suggest four different processes involved: Accomodation, imitation, telegraphic condensation and conventions.

      Nonetheless, while the simplification of input was thought to be the reason why creole languages have 'simple grammar' , there are

many criticisms on this explanation . For instance, there are many creoles that have a lot of similarities despite of the fact that they come from different language lexifiers. Moreover, speakers of a standard language tend to fail in the undertsanding of the grammar of a creole that is supposed to come from that same language. Bloomfield (1933), also explains that if creole is based on the imitation of the incorrect speech of non-natives, that describes pidgin and, thus, it may not be accurate to take the origin of pidgin as the origin of creole.

5. Imperfect L2 Learning

The Imperfect L2 Learning hypothesis affirms that pidgins are the result of the incapacity of slaves to acquire the dominant lexifier language. Researches have revealed that there are various aspects of interlanguages in pidgins and creoles such as invariant verbs derived from the infinite or the least marked verb form and the use of adverbs to express modality.

This hypothesis is compatible with other approaches, notably the European dialect origin hypothesis and the universalist models of language transmission. However, the question of the shared origin of pidgins and creoles rises again as well as the inquiry about whether this applies to all creoles or not.

Theories focusing on Non-European input

These theories attribute similarities among creole and African substrate languages. The creole is thought to be originated by the process of relexification, that is when the substrate language replaces the lexicon of the native language while retaining the native grammar categories. The problem with this theory is that there is a great amount of differences between the argued superstrate language and the creole languages. Bickerton (1981) argues that the vast amount of African languages and the paucity of a historical record on creole genesis makes determining lexical correspondances a matter of chance.

Gradualist and developmental hypothesis

Keith Whinnom (in Hymes, 1971) argues that pidgins are the starting point of creoles where there are at least three different languages that are non intelligible for the majority and where one of them is the

dominant superstrate. If a pidgin manage to survive and be learned by children as a native langauge, it may become fixed and acquire a more complex grammar and a fix phonology , syntax and morphology through the process of *creolization* where- different from *pidginization* that entails simplication- the pidgin suffers and *expansion* in all the linguistic areas. Thus, pidgins can become full languages in only one generation. This last statement is still arguable as the process of creolization is complex in nature and may not take only one generation to be fulfilled. Moreover, apart from having native speakers, there are some other aspects of creolization which may have more relevance to determine if a pidgin has become a creole or not.

Universalist approach

Bickerton's *Language Bio-program* is the paragon of the Universalist model. Bickerton claims that creoles come from children in new founded plantations who invented a structure for pidgins around to function as natural languages with their own innate capacities to transform the pidgin into a full-fleched language. Hence, the similarities among creoles would be the consequence of those of the innate universal abilities in what Noam Chomsky denominated *Universal grammar*.

Decreolization

It is considered as the general direction which a creole language takes in its elaboration to accommodate a standard language (Jones-Jackson, 1984) or homogenize with the parent language for various reasons. It can also be conceived as the influence of the superstrate language that dismantles influences from the substrate languages.

On the other hand, if one sees pidginization as simplification and creolization as expansion, one may consider decreolization as a process that attacks both, simplification and admixture.

As language remain in contact, it is inevitable that one influences the other. In most of the cases, it is the prestigious one who gain power over the other bringing complexities, irregularities and redundancies to the creole language. Elements from other sources start to disappear as the resemblance grows, and then, it is theorized that the creole will eventually become a dialect of the suprastate language rather than a separate language.

However, in few cases, the process could occur in a reverse, when the most standardized variation , the acrolect, is transformed to a more basic form, similar either to the mesolect or to basilect. This may happen mainly for socio-political reasons, namely, when speakers have a strong sense of national identity or when there are prejudices against the prestigious langauge's culture and society (See Wilson 1973: Principle of Communitas).

Example of decreolized creoles

1. Jamaican creole

This creole exists in continuum with Jamaican English and Standard English and shows evidence of decreolization. This is encouraged by the speakers's view on Jamaican creole as 'bad English' so that the most standardized forms are spoken by people from more educated and urban settings. Thus, one may say Jamaican creole is in a post-creole speech continuum in which the less standard varieties are undergoing decreolization.

2. Portuguese creole in Asia

Macau and Daman's creoles have undergone a process of decreolization when the Asian places were still providences of Portugal and there was a shift to standard Portuguese in the 18th century. Macanese Patois, or the creole of Macau, has also a substrate from Malay, Cantonese and Sinhalese. Nowadays, it is considered by the UNESCO as a " critically endangered" language with only 50 speakers (Creole, n.d).

Post-creole continuum

It is a dialect continuum of varieties of a creole which rank from the most standardized, the *acrolect*, to the less similar to the suprastate, the *basilect*. Ranges in between the acrolect and the basilect are part of the *mesolect*. Social, political, cultural as well as linguistic factors are the producers of these varieties which, eventually, may lead to a *decreolization* of the creole language.

There are no discrete boundaries between the different varieties and the situation in which such a continuum exists. The statistical results of the Labovian-type sociolinguistic analysis of the post-continuum may by themselves be insufficient to establish

conclusively which variant forms operate in different systems, and what boundaries to establish between these systems.

Apart from that, due to the commonality of code-switchng in creole countries, speakers have a command of a range in the continuum and, depending or their social and educational background or their communicative purposes, they can implement the different variations with distinct levels of skill.

4. DISCUSSION: The Nature of Creolization and Decreolization

In the following pages, the nature of these two main processes will be discussed by contrasting opposite views and providing extra support in some research findings. For the purpose of analysing from the less to the most controversial issue, the author will present ,first, the debate about decreolization followed by the discussion on creolization .

Discussion on decreolization
In this section, two main contrasting perspectives about the process of decreolization   are discussed: Bikerton's (1990) and Washabaugh's (1997). Some examples of decreolization from Wilson's (1973) , Winford's (1978) and Jones-Jackson*'s* (1984) researches are as well presented as arguments in favor or against these views.

Unidimensional or Multidirectional?
Acoording to Bickerton (1990), the variation in this process is unidimensional which means that the princpipal motive for decreolization is the social pressure speakers have to deal with in order to acquire a standard language or acrolect . Thus, speakers vary their speech along the single dimension of standard (acrolect) to non-standard (basilect) being these variations related to the deep structure of the language

However, as Washabaugh (1997) will also argue, decreolization is , indeed, multidirectional in nature. According to this scholar, there are basically three types of movement in this process : Vertical variation, variation by contrast and horizontal variation. The first one occurs when the speaker uses the acrolect to replace the stigmatized basilect. In his research of the creole in Providence Island, Colombia from 1972-1975, he found this type of

variation between *fi* and *tu,* being *fi* part of the basilect and *tu* the nearest option to the standard language or acrolect. The second type refers to the social pressure, not so much to acquire the acrolect, but to avoid the basilect. The last one, the horizontal variation, covers the cases where the movement cant be explain either as a tendency to the standard or as avoidance of the basilect , namely, the pre-infinitival complementizer fi/fa from casual to informal in the creole of Providencia (Washabaugh, 1997).

On the other hand, the variation in decreolization not only concerns the deep-structure but also the superficial- structure. Some changes are done in terms of function as well as in morphology.

A mere linguistic phenomenon?
Furthermore, decreolization is caused not only by linguistic factors but also by social pressures and cultural tendencies. As Wilford (1972) argues, patterns of variation in language use reflect certain aspects of social differentiation. Thus, inequity, social differention and media, are catalizers of change in the post-continua of a creole language.

As an example, the principle of 'communitas' described by Wilson (1973), shows how the pressure of the community restrains speakers from moving too far and too fast in tehir acquisition of the acrolect since strong feelings are generated against people, whether adults or children, who try to use a more standard speech than is customary. Islanders may call the people who use the standard as 'yankin' or 'speakin' which for the community is a sign that speakers consider themselves too good for the island (Wilson, 1973 in Washabaugh, 1997). As a consequence, children learning English in school cannot practice that English outside the classroom without being criticized by their peers. Indeed, people who use hypercorrect speech are vulnerable to gossip and abusive comments. One of the examples Wilson gives is the one about an islander girl who had acquired a sort of Standard English intonation which she applied in all her lower-mesolect speech; "she was mocked as 'American Mary' both for her inconsistency and for her ambitiousness". (Wilson,1973 in Washabaugh, 1997). Another example of the influence of social factors in the decreolization of a language is Winford's (1972-1975) reports on the results of a sociolinguistic investigation of two Trinidadian communities which indicate that patterns of variation in language use

reflect certain aspects of social differentiation in the island. Besideds that, Winford (1978) followed this up later with a detailed study of socially-conditioned phonological change in the context of the decreolization process in Trinidad.

Through these examples one may realize decreolization occurs in both directions from basilect to acrolect and viceversa. However, according to Washabaugh, (1997)., the strongest motive for variation in decreolization is the pressure to avoid the basilect, not the pressure to acquire the acrolect. He argues that speakers are not so often conscious of the way they speak, but they are certain about the way they don't want to speak, as his example from Providence creole confirms:

"Basilect speakers talk 'broad' or 'wide open', with very low [a] vowels, and use creaky voice for emphasis. They 'dreg dem word', i.e. lengthen their vowels. This stigmatization of features of the basilect puts pressure on speakers to avoid basilectal words, sounds, and grammatical patterns. In doing so, speakers back themselves into the acquisition of the acrolect on Providence Island is a sort of hyper-extended second-language accomplished in the reverse of the natural manner…" (p. 334).

Summary on decreolization chart

Bickerton (1990)	Washabaugh (1997)
Variation in decreolization entirely unidimensional	Multidirectionality of variation in decreolization : Type 1, or vertical variation Type 2 variation, by contrast Type 3, or horizontal variation
The motive for decreolization is the social pressure on speakers to acquire a standard language (acrolect); therefore speakers in a post-creole community vary their speech along the single dimension of standard (acrolect)/non-standard (basilect).	+ The strongest motive for variation in decreolization is the pressure to avoid the basilect, not the pressure to acquire the acrolect + It is not completely directed by the pressure to acquire the standard language. speakers in a post-creole community are triply pressured: to avoid the basilect, to acquire the acrolect, and to vary the mesolect
The constraints on, at least, the variation between the complementizers fi and tu in decreolization are all of a kind, and deal with the deep-structure configuration of the sentences	It is not entirely constrained by deep-structure category
It is directed mainly by linguistic factors	+ It is directed by both social and linguistic pressures, and is con- strained not only by purely linguistic factors

	+ Interplay between linguistic and social structure, and of the role which social forces play in the ongoing processes of linguistic change patterns of variation in language use reflect certain aspects of social differentiation (Wilford, 1972)

Ways of decreolization

Various are the techniques seen in a decreolization process. One of them is the decnominated *Hypercorrection* or *irregularity of placement*. According to Wolfram (1969) , hypercorrection is "the use of a speech form on the basis of a false analogy" (Wolfram, 1969 in Winford, 1973. P 139). DeCamp also defines hypercorrection more precisely as "an incorrect analogy with a form in a prestige dialect which the speaker has imperfectly master" (Decamp, 1972 in Winford, 1973. P 139).

An example of the hypercorrection technique is seeing in the patterns of variation of two consonantal variables (th) and (dh) by the speakers in St. James, a community in Trinidad island . The former represents the consonantal sound in words like think, thing, through, etc., which may be realized variably as [Ɵ], [tƟ] or [t]. (dh) represents the consonant in words like that, though, there, etc., which Trini-dadians pronounce variably as [ɖ], [d ɖ] or [d].

Apart from that, some words may change not only in phonological but also in morphological terms. This is the case of the word *men* in Providence island where *me* is the nearest form to the standard, *wen* , the middle form and *ben* the furthest from the lexifier. For a standard English speaker *wen* and *ben* are just as *me*; in other words, *me* is just as non-standard as *wen* or *ben*, but from the point of view of the basilect or mesolect speaker, the *me* serves its purpose, "it allows one to avoid the traditionally stigmatized basilect" (Washabaugh, 1997. P 335). .

Summary on techniques of decreolization chart

Post-continua analysis : Movements progressive and variable from Basilect to Acrolect
Exclusion words, less frequently of sounds, and occasionally even of some 'intonation' patterns.   Ex: men: me, wen, or ben
The principle of 'communitas'

Ex: Islanders say that a 'yankin speaking' or an acrolect nearer the standard language is a sign that speakers consider themselves too good for the island
Hypercorrection or 'irregularities of placement '.

Discussion on Creolization

In this part, two main reverse approaches to creolization are discussed: Bikerton's Creole exceptionalism (1990) depicted in his 'Bio-program theory' and DGraff's (1999) 'Cartesian Unitarianism'.

The question of the origin

Whether one may believe it or not, the question about the origin of creole languages has not been answered yet. Although some researches have been conducted in order to determine the philology of these languages and many hypothesis have arisen to explain this phenomenon, it is still unclear from where and from whom their origin comes.

Two main orientations reveal the debatable nature of this matter., Bikerton's Creole exceptionalism (1990) depicted in his 'bioprogram theory' and DGraff's (1999) Cartesian Unitarianism. Let us consider both so as to have more clarity about the consequences of adopting one or another perspective.

The origin of creoles

According to Bickerton (1990), creoles are 'degenerate descendants' of European languages derived from early pidgins that were developed by children of a ' new generation' who lived in tea plantations . In Bikerton's point of view, "the work of new language creation can be attributed largely if not exclusively to children" (Bickerton 1999, p. 49-50). Thus, it was the creole children who generated creoles as a response to the need of a more complete and complex system of communication. As the pidgins from their parents lacked of various linguistic aspects, children took some elements of the surrounding pidgins, their parents's pidgins and combined them with their innate language ability to give rise to the creole language. He came to this conclusion after his study of the Hatian Creole (HC). Besides that, he supports his ideas by the UG theory formulated by Noam Chomsky, which argues for universal principles in language which are innate to all human beings and constitute the natural capacity to acquire the complexity of the language system.

However, how could one come to such a conclusion about the origin of creoles if their circumstances of emerge were almost entirely not documented? This is what DGraff (1999) wonders and argues against Bickerton's hypothesis. He supports his claim by citing Robert's (1996) research findings which constitute an evidence of the difference and incompability between the jargon/early-pidgin characteristics and the currently professed creole forms. In fact, Roberts denies any catastrophic 'single generation' scenario for creole formation. Since the data from her research on Haitian creole reveals "a more 'gradual' development of HCE (Haitian Creole English). Apart from that, DGraff denotes that the 'creole-creating' children were not completely insulated from non-pidgin imput as they were exposed in various degrees to , first, their parents native language directly or indirectly and , second, to forms of the target languages. Hence, creoles " should be similar to those of their substrates and to those of their superstrates" (DeGraff 1992, p. 12).

On the other hand, concerning the fact of assuming children being the 'creole creators', DGraff suggests that such an affirmation may represent a serious offense and prejudice against creole speakers, for this would lead to see creoles as " 'infantile jargons' or 'an infantile language for an infantile race'" (ACE 397 in Bickerton, 2004). According to him, this hypothesis depicts creole speakers as if they lacked full human intelligence and drives a wedge between standard and creole speakers where the last ones are usually considered inferior (DGraff, 1999). In Hymes's words: " Not the least of the crimes of colonialism has been to persuade the colonized that they or ways in which they differ, are inferior   to convinced the stigmatized that the stigma is deserved'" (Hymes,1971 in Bickerton,2004. P 829).

But, is it equal to say that creoles are linguistically inferior to their superstrate languages to affirm that creole speakers are less intelligent or that creole's race is inferior? Certainly, it is not, affirms Bickerton. He claims that the special circumstances of creole's origin and development are what make it so unique in its linguistic features. As Bickerton expresses:

"No creolist that I know of has ever doubted that the faculty of language is everywhere and in every normal member of the species exactly the same. But surely no one would claim that the circumstances confronting that faculty are everywhere the same" (Bickerton, 2004, p. 832)

Besides that, Bickerton finds ironically connected the fact of the dominance of the superstratum theory of creoles being distinct from and unrelated to any Eurpean lexifiers with the rise of Black Power Negritute and similar consciousness-raising in other traditionally marginalized social groups:

"Is it mere coincidence that the return to a traditional genetic approach coincide with the withering and marginalization of such movements acceptance of the need for accommodation with the still-dominant power structure? These are surely among the questions that reflexive legitimately ask " (p. 832).

Hence, the desires of proving creoles as independent language system may be derived from socio-political motives rather than from a serious linguistic analysis.

Is creole a cornerstone in the search for the Language origin?

Bickerton denominates creoles as pidgin-like protolangues, in other words, he sees creole languages as constituents of an exceptional class on phylogenetic and/or typological ground. This scholar comapres creole systems to the 'Darwin's finches' , a group of different species of passerine birds discovered by Charles Darwin in 1831 in Galápagos , Ecuator that provided a clear hint about the process of evolution.

Nevertheless, DGraff, based on Robert's findings, rebuts Bickerton's assumptions putting into consideration the following arguments. Firstly, the two phenomena-Pidgin and Creole formation-among humans speaking modern languages versus the emergence of human language among our (prelinguistic) hominid ancestors are not commensurate. As Roberts (1998) claims: "they share no fundamental property that warrants taking the former as a recapitulation of the latter" (Roberts, 1998 in Bickerton's , 2004. P 835). Secondly, if creole languages are seen as primitive in terms of structure or depicting the archetypal human language, then, it would mean speakers of creole would face huge difficulties adopting a 'superior' language to meet the communicative requirements of the modern world. Certainly, if we undertake this stance, it may constitute a handicap for creole speakers to acquire a superstrate language ; which has already been proved false since in most of the creole communities, part of the habitants not only speak creole but also the standard lexifier and other variations. Finallly, the argument of 'evolution' cannot be applied to creole languages as they constitute the result of a conscious

cognitivie process rather than the product of a natural random process; in DGraff's words: Things do not "evolve" by "cognitive processes ; they evolve by natural selection acting on random variation' " (p 385).

Despite this, creole generation may be indeed considered as a cornerstone in the quest for the origin of language since it depicts a more traceable linguistic process of the starting and development of a language which may provide various hints on the beginnings of Language.

Against Creole exceptionalim

In what DGraff denominates 'Creole exceptionalim', he argues against considering creole systems as exceptional and stands for their treatement as legitimate offsprings of their main lexifiers, just as Irish English is considered an offspring of English. On his view, creole formation or creolization involves the same internal mechanisms that a standard language underlies ((DeGraff,1999).

Nonetheless, there are some weak points in DGraff's contra-argument. Firstly, it is true that creoles are among other linguistic phenomena and that an exaggerated emphasis on it may cause the sense of incapability to compare creole processes to other linguistic cases. Secondly, creole genesis is certainly exceptional for the circumstances in which creole was generated have been always marked by extreme situations of violence, rebellion and mixture. Hence, to claim that creole formation is equal to the formation of a standard language might be a risky asseveration.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The origin of creole is still uncertain , thus, the process of creolization is still debatable. Therefore, its status as a 'language in its own' or as a 'derivate from pidgin' may be determined by the study of the characteristics of current creole systems in further research that not merely take into account linguistic aspects but also social and cultural affairs .

On the other hand, traditionally, the concept of 'dying language' has been used to refer to the morphological, phonological, and syntactical decay of so-called natural languages, while the term decreolization has been used to refer to the morphological, phonological, and syntactical elaboration of features characteristic of

creole language. But, as Jones-Jackson (1984) affirms, if creoles are taken as languages , then, the utmost tendencies to resemble the standard language may be regarded as the 'dying of the creole language'. Hence, the study of creole languages that are disappearing might be denominated as the study of 'dying languages' which is a quite novel approach in linguistics. Indeed, "a study of the life cycle of its structural components in their stages of viability, fluctuation, or impending extinction could contribute significantly to decreolization and language death theory" (Jones-Jackson,1984: 352).

Nevertheless, at the end, it is all in the hands of own's orientation. Depending on the own perception of creole languages, the metaphor of creolization and decreolization as the birth and dying of a language may be deemed appropriate or not.

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